



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/631,226	07/31/2003	Chris D. Chiodo		1729

7590
Lawrence J. Shurupoff
16651 Topanga Lane
Delray Beach, FL 33484

03/26/2007

EXAMINER

FETZNER, TIFFANY A

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2859

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
31 DAYS	03/26/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

26

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/631,226

Applicant(s)

CHIODO, CHRIS D.

Examiner

Tiffany A. Fetzner

Art Unit

2859

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 15 December 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED Restriction resulting from the 12/15/2006 Amendment.

Election/Restrictions

1. Upon further consideration and based on applicant's amendments filed 12/15/2007 concerning the "positioning" within each of applicant's independent claims a restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

- I. **Claims 1-9**, drawn to an **integrated gradient coil and probing coil-positioning assembly interconnected by a keyed surface portion**, classified in class 324, subclass 318.
- II. **Claims 10-15**, drawn to an **integrated gradient coil positioning assembly**, alone classified in class 324, subclass 318.
- III. **Claims 16-20**, drawn to a **coil and specimen positioning assembly**, classified in class 324, subclass 321.
- IV. **Claim 21**, drawn to a method of **automatically positioning** a non-human laboratory specimen in an MRI imaging apparatus having an MRI imaging bore, classified in class 324, subclass 307.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

2. **Inventions I, II and III** are distinct from the method of Invention **IV** as product and process of use. The inventions can be shown to be distinct if either or both of the following can be shown: (1) the process for using the product as claimed can be practiced with another materially different product or (2) the product as claimed can be used in a materially different process of using that product. See MPEP § 806.05(h). In the instant case the Method of claim IV can be used for automatically positioning specimens in an MRI imaging apparatus having an MRI imaging bore, which may incorporate an arbitrary positioning assembly, that is not specifically connected to any of the positioning assemblies specified in **Groups I, II, and III** above.

3. **Inventions I, II and III** are also distinct from the method of Invention **IV** and related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another and materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case

Art Unit: 2859

the apparatuses of **Groups I, II, and III** can each be used in the practice of non-automatic / manual positioning of the individually distinct positioning assemblies of **Groups I, II, and III**.

4. **Inventions I and II** are related as combination and subcombination. Inventions in this relationship are distinct if it can be shown that (1) the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed for patentability, and (2) that the subcombination has utility by itself or in other combinations (MPEP § 806.05(c)). In the instant case, the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed because the combination also includes a probing coil structure with the integrated gradient coil positioning assembly and includes mounting components with keyed surfaces which are not aspects of the Group II integrated gradient coil positioning assembly. The subcombination has separate utility such as an integrated gradient coil positioning assembly, itself.

5. **Inventions III and II** are related as combination and subcombination. Inventions in this relationship are distinct if it can be shown that (1) the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed for patentability, and (2) that the subcombination has utility by itself or in other combinations (MPEP § 806.05(c)). In the instant case, the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed because the combination also includes a specimen positioning assembly and includes specimen positioning component interconnection and the actual specimen retention device / holder which are not aspects of the Group II integrated gradient coil positioning assembly. The subcombination has separate utility such as an integrated gradient coil positioning assembly, itself.

6. The examiner has required restriction between combination and subcombination inventions or **Groups I, II and III**, I as noted above. Where applicant elects a subcombination, and claims thereto are subsequently found allowable, any claim(s) depending from or otherwise requiring all the limitations of the allowable subcombination will be examined for patentability in accordance with 37 CFR 1.104. See MPEP § 821.04(a). Applicant is advised that if any claim presented in a continuation or divisional application is anticipated by, or includes all the limitations of, a

claim that is allowable in the present application, such claim may be subject to provisional statutory and/or nonstatutory double patenting rejections over the claims of the instant application.

7. **Inventions I and III** are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct if they do not overlap in scope and are not obvious variants, and if it is shown that at least one subcombination is separately usable. In the instant case, subcombination of the integrated gradient coil and probing coil positioning system has separate utility such as positioning the MRI excitation and gradient coils, within an MRI apparatus, irrespective of whether a specimen is located within the MRI apparatus, See MPEP § 806.05(d).

8. The examiner has required restriction between subcombinations usable together. Where applicant elects a subcombination and claims thereto are subsequently found allowable, any claim(s) depending from or otherwise requiring all the limitations of the allowable subcombination will be examined for patentability in accordance with 37 CFR 1.104. See MPEP § 821.04(a). Applicant is advised that if any claim presented in a continuation or divisional application is anticipated by, or includes all the limitations of, a claim that is allowable in the present application, such claim may be subject to provisional statutory and/or nonstatutory double patenting rejections over the claims of the instant application.

9. Because these inventions are independent or distinct for the reasons given above and there would be a serious burden on the examiner if restriction were not required because the inventions have acquired a separate status in the art in view of their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

10. Because these inventions are independent or distinct for the reasons given above and there would be a serious burden on the examiner if restriction were not required because the inventions require a different field of search (see MPEP § 808.02), restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

11. Because these inventions are independent or distinct for the reasons given above and there would be a serious burden on the examiner if restriction were not required because the inventions have acquired a separate status in the art due to their

recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

12. Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include (i) an election of a species or invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143) and (ii) identification of the claims encompassing the elected invention.

13. The election of an invention or species may be made with or without traverse. To reserve a right to petition, the election must be made with traverse. If the reply does not distinctly and specifically point out supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election shall be treated as an election without traverse.

14. Should applicant traverse on the ground that the inventions or species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the inventions or species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C.103 (a) of the other invention.

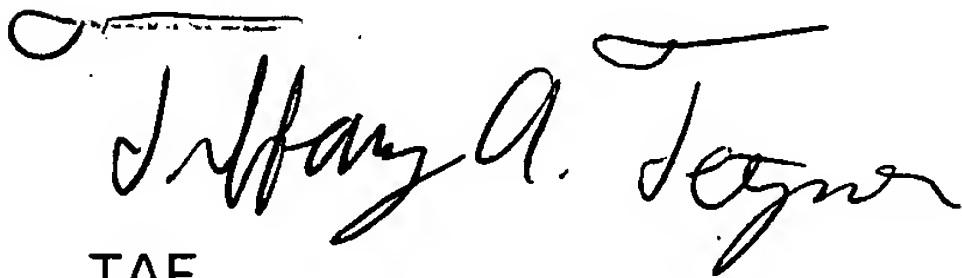
15. The attempts by the examiner to reach the applicant's representative by phone on 3/16/2007 and at 9:30 am on 3/19/2007 went unresolved because the applicant's representative was unavailable.

16. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Tiffany A. Fetzner whose telephone number is (571)-272-2241. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday 7am-4:30 pm and Alternate Fridays.

17. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gutierrez Diego can be reached on (571)-272-2245. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

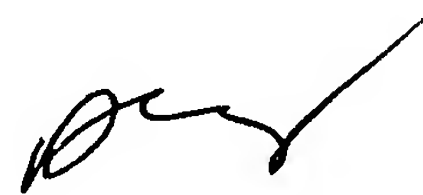
Art Unit: 2859

18. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



TAF

March 19th 2007



Diego Gutierrez
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Technology Center 2800